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ABSTRACT

This study examined parent and teacher attitudes toward developmentally appropriate instructional practice compared to traditional skill-based instruction in the classroom. The study surveyed parents and teachers of kindergarten, first, and second grade students in Marin County, California. The results of the surveys showed that most parents and teachers strongly favor a majority of the concepts of developmentally appropriate instructional practice, and generally prefer such instruction over traditional skills-based instruction. Both parents and teachers believed that a student-centered curriculum is an important factor in children's education. However, a majority of parents indicated they believed that workbooks and textbooks were valuable learning tools, which differed from teacher opinion. The study notes that developmentally appropriate instruction is at the heart of the educational reform and restructuring movement, and that central to its implementation is a well-trained staff supported by knowledgeable and informed parents. (Two appendices contain parents' and teachers' cover letters, survey form, and results. Contains 21 references.) (AP)

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PARENT AND TEACHER ATTITUDES:

An Examination of Parent and Teacher Attitudes toward Developmentally Appropriate and Traditional Instructional Practice.

by

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Dominican College Department of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education: Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

This study examined parent and teacher attitudes towards developmentally appropriate and traditional instructional practice in the classroom. The parents and teachers surveyed were parents and teachers of kindergarten, first and second grade students. Results indicated that both parents and teachers believed that a student centered curriculum was an important factor in children's education, and both groups valued the concept of emerging literacy. Parents' attitudes towards traditional instructional practice were divided; about one third indicated a positive response towards these practices, whereas nearly half indicated a negative response. The remainer were undecided.

Parent and Teacher Attitudes:
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INTRODUCTION

Two six year olds named Anna and Trevor were collecting their backpacks and coats, preparing to go home for the day. They each spent their day at school in entirely different settings. Anna is a first grade student at a school where developmentally appropriate instructional practice has been implemented. Trevor is enrolled in a skills-based first grade class.

At first Anna's parents were suspicious because of what they perceived as the non-traditional nature of the kindergarten program. Once school started, they became increasingly enthusiastic. Little Anna loves her new classroom. She often brings home a "book" that she has printed of her friend's names and other words that have meaning to her. She is beginning to construct simple sentences using inventive spelling in her writing as well as pictures she has drawn. Anna looks forward to going to school each day and is proud of her work at school. She especially loves to show her work to her father

who is lavish in his praise towards her. Anna's mother has reported to her friends that she is very impressed with the program that Anna is in at school. Now that they have experienced it she would not have it any other way. Anna is growing in her ability and interest in reading, yet there has been little formal instruction in the traditional sense.

Trevor's parents chose a back-to-basics, academic classroom for him because they believe that he needs to get off to a good start in his education. Trevor's classroom is completely filled with desks at which the children sit all day with the exception of recess and lunchtime. The few puzzles and manipulatives that are in the classroom are kept in the closet and only taken out during inside recess when it's raining. Trevor goes from one workbook to the next all day long. Much of the day Trevor spends hanging sideways off his chair. The teacher continually reprimands the children for their inappropriate behavior and noise level. Trevor studies lists of spelling words for the weekly tests. He is part of an ability based basal reading group. His parents feel that the discipline and structure of the classroom is important for his future success in school. They approve of the daily homework load, and dutifully oversee it. Trevor looks for any excuse to stay home from school, and often complains of a stomach ache or sore throat,

even though he rarely appears to be sick. He is not a confident boy and often seeks attention in inappropriate ways. The teacher considers him to be a discipline problem and wonders if he will ever learn what he needs to enter second grade.

Many parents regard traditional academics for their primary children almost as if they were a religious issue. These parents derive a great deal of their esteem from their children's performance at school. Whether in the parking lot at school, or at a party, such parents often tout their children's reading ability or performance on a standardized test. Many parents seem to validate themselves as successful parents by the perceived successes of their children.

Such parents often regard new ideas such as "developmentally appropriate practice" or "authentic assessment" as misguided. But others, such as Anna's parents, are willing to consider a new approach, and once observing their child's response to it, become enthusiastic proponents of the new approach. Their attitudes towards emerging literacy becomes much broader and more accepting, seeing it in much the same manner as they see a child's learning to talk and to walk. That is, they are more relaxed about it, and more willing to not insist on perfection in their child's work. Parent's attitudes towards

their children's success in school may be connected to the kind of program their children are enrolled in, and to how well the teacher can communicate the goals and purposes of that program throughout the year. Just as teachers are constructing new knowledge about how children learn to read and write in naturally developing ways and what appropriate educational practice is, so must parents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

What are parents and teachers attitudes towards developmentally appropriate instructional practice as compared with traditional skills based instructional practice in kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms?

Attitudes are defined as preferences for or disagreements with specific educational practices. **Developmentally appropriate instructional practice** is defined as instructional practice in which the curriculum is matched to the child's level of mental ability where children are given opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support. **Traditional skills based instructional practice** is defined as instructional practice in which the teacher follows a set, worksheet-dictated curriculum with an emphasis

on drill and practice and where standardized test scores are used for assessment.

RATIONALE

Developmentally appropriate instruction in early childhood education has been a major focus of policy, practice and research for ten to fifteen years. The foundation of developmentally appropriate practice is that children are capable of assuming responsibility for their own learning. (Gareau & Kennedy, 1991)

Constructivism encourages creating learning environments that nurture autonomy in young children. (Devries & Kohlberg, 1987) This emphasis, that the child is an active, autonomous learner is the basis for the theory that children naturally emerge into literacy when they are provided with an environment that is rich with books and print and are read to consistently. The constructivist perspective integrates cognitive and socioemotional domains of functioning and links practice to theory. The work of pioneer child psychologist and cognitive theorist, Jean Piaget (Helms & Turner, 1981) provides the theoretical foundation for this approach. Piaget believes that children are active participants in their environment, curiously seeking out that which interests them and avoiding that which does not. He postulates that

intellectual maturity is achieved through five orderly and distinct stages of development and that a child's learning is a function of that development. He believes that children learn by doing and that they can perceive the world only in the way they themselves have experienced it.

Piaget provides a framework for categorizing knowledge by differentiating physical, logical-mathematical, and social-conventional knowledge as determined by the source of the knowledge as reported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE,1990) A framework for categorizing and understanding the nature of knowledge by distinguishing spontaneous concepts from school-learned concepts is provided by Vygotsky (1978). Spontaneous concepts are those that the child discovers through direct experience, such as adding ice cubes to water to make it colder. School-learned or scientific concepts originate in the culture but are usually learned at school, such as the Fahrenheit scale informing us that ice freezes at 32 degrees, while the Celsius scale names the freezing point at zero.

Research in the last fifteen years has provided a strong knowledge base for understanding how children learn in naturally developing ways. Vygotsky's school-learned concepts are analogous to Piaget's social-conventional knowledge, just as Vygotsky's notion of spontaneous concepts parallels Piaget's view of construction of knowledge. (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1990) The basis for current advocacy of developmentally appropriate curriculum practices in early childhood education is grounded in Piaget's theory of how children construct knowledge. (Hoffman & Kantner, 1991) This emphasis, that the child is an active, autonomous learner is the basis for the key experiences of developmentally appropriate instructional practice.

Parents and teachers want their students to be well-educated and successful. The early grades pose a special challenge because that is when children's attitudes toward school and learning are shaped. Children have an incredible drive to learn, and careful, adults can nourish it. The biggest mistake is pushing a child too hard, too soon. As a society we attach great value to academic behavior and achievement. Strom (1965) observed that the excessive value attached to academic achievement and the pressures to grow up and achieve earlier could be damaging to personal development. Strom

placed achievement and age in perspective when he observed that the only path to maturity is by way of childhood; that is, the future citizen must be a child before being an adult.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

The issue of parents and teachers attitudes towards developmentally appropriate instructional practice as compared with traditional skills based instructional practice needs to be looked at more closely. In the 1980's the back-to-basics movement began to impose teaching methods intended for high school students on first graders. (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989) The trend of the time was more; more homework, more tests, more drill, more discipline, more worksheets, and more seatwork. Children should be behind their desks, not roaming around the room. Teachers should be at the head of the classrooms, in control, drilling knowledge into their students. Much of this was a reaction against the British system of "open education" that was introduced in the 1970's which allowed children to develop at their own pace within a highly structured classroom. (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989) Many times teachers and principals who tried "open education" thought it meant simply tearing down classroom walls and letting children do whatever they wanted. The

results were often disastrous and there was a backlash against it. (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989)

By the mid-1980's parents were demanding more from the elementary schools their children attended. Many three and four year olds were attending some form of preschool and their parents expected these classroom veterans to be reading by the second semester of kindergarten. We began looking at the number of years a child had been in school instead of considering their cognitive development. Parents and districts were demanding hard evidence that their children were learning. The curriculum was "pushed down" so that what had been formerly taught in primary grades was being taught to five year olds in kindergarten.

The accountability movement with its emphasis on standardized test scores caused a narrow view of the curriculum, limited to easily measured basic skills on multiple choice tests leading children to be drilled on content that is devoid of meaning. The trend toward drill and practice on isolated academic skills in kindergarten and first grade has trickled down further to programs for three and four year olds. As a result, the early school experiences of many children are marred by unnecessary struggle and failure. (Bredekamp, 1987)

In response to these dilemmas, the early childhood profession represented by the NAEYC entered the educational reform debate by issuing influential position statements defining developmentally appropriate practices for young children (Bredekamp, 1987) In California, the State Department of Education formed a School Readiness Task Force charged with examining schooling for children from four through six years old which published its report, Here They Come: Ready or Not! in 1988. It's Elementary! (1992) is the California task force report on elementary grades. Both of these task force reports are intended to assist teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders in achieving excellence in public schools during the most critical years of a child's educational development, pointing the way for reform efforts in the coming decade.

Teachers have been exposed to a variety of unconnected and sometimes contradictory educational practices and policies. Parents too, have been exposed to a variety of educational practices and policies and have perceptions of what their children need in order to succeed in school. It is important to give parents a coherent framework for understanding the learning and development of their children. Just as teachers are constructing new knowledge about how children learn

to read and write in naturally developing ways, so must a parent construct this new knowledge. Parents need to know the "whys" of the current teaching strategies so that they can better understand and support their children's early efforts to read and write and learn in their own way. (Hoffman & Kanter, 1992)

Both parents and teachers want children to be successful learners. Learning to read and write is a significant part of success in school. The extent to which children are enabled to become competent readers and writers will depend greatly on the collaborative efforts of both parents and teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum (Hohmann, Banet & Weikart, 1979) provides a structure for defining the use of space and time, for selecting materials, and for observing children within a constructivist perspective. This approach gives teachers a powerful tool for interpreting the learning activity of children and for judging the degree to which educational practices foster active learning. The developmentally appropriate classroom model encourages children to make choices by presenting them with clearly defined activity areas

and engaging them in the conscious use of their time. Materials in the classroom correspond to developmentally appropriate areas of knowledge. In this kind of classroom children experience a balance between autonomous and teacher-guided learning. Learning takes place within the context of one-to-one interaction with the teacher, aide or parent-helper, small group activities, and large group situations. The key question at all times is: Does a particular practice facilitate the engagement of children in active, constructive learning?

In a developmentally appropriate classroom teachers consider the implications of developmental theory when planning for curriculum content areas. Instruction is guided by what is known about how children learn and develop. Experience has a powerful influence on children's emerging thinking abilities, therefore teachers are trained to incorporate "key experiences" into the curriculum.

Children's understanding of the form and function of print is the basis for how instruction in literacy is carried out. (Kontos, 1989) Early primary classrooms have traditionally taught children to read by teaching a sequence of skills. Developmentally appropriate classrooms support and extend emerging literacy by using information

about how young children come to understand how spoken and written language relate to each other. (Dyson 1990)

Active, autonomous learning is seen as crucial. Choice is central to fostering children's autonomy. Using the five simple components of an active learning experience as defined by Hohmann (1983) children are given choices in how they will use materials, what materials they will use, how they will manipulate those materials, the language between children about their task, and the support they receive from the teacher for their experience. By observing how choice motivates learning, teachers and parents value the structuring of classroom experiences that give children more control over their activities.

In developmentally appropriate classrooms teachers are observers and facilitators of learning. They enter into children's play without changing it, using strategies from the inter-reactive learning method (Weiss, 1981). By first being silent, listening, observing, and coming to an understanding of what children are thinking about in their work or play, teachers can make relevant comments, pose open-ended questions that stretch thinking, and offer additional materials to extend children's ideas.

A stimulating, well-organized, classroom environment that is rich with books and print nurtures the developing literacy of children. Interest areas are created throughout the classroom and a large rug area is available for whole class instruction and large motor activities. Desks are not used in the traditional way as the room is set up for children's use. The materials are accessible, logically organized, culturally sensitive and labeled for easy use and clean-up by children. The learning environment is an important component of instructional strategy (Loughlin & Suina, 1982). Schickedanz's (1986) work on making a print-rich environment, and Hohmann, Banet and Weikart's (1979) ideas on providing a rich array of organized, labeled materials help to nurture and extend literacy.

The focal point of the day is the balance of whole group and small group teacher-initiated activities and the "plan-do-review" sequence. The "plan-do-review" sequence is similar to Oken-Wright's (1988) "show and tell" of children's work rather than possessions. The "plan-do-review" sequence gives the children a regular scheduled time to pursue their own ideas in the classroom environment while interacting with the teacher. This balance of whole group, small group, and one-to-one interaction allows students time to pursue their own interests

throughout the day. There is a growing consensus among early childhood educators that children learn best when encouraged to invent their own ways to solve problems and are provided opportunities to make their own decisions and exchange viewpoints with their peers. (Williams & Kamii, 1986)

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Children learn best when their physical needs are met and they feel psychologically safe and secure. (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 1990) In a developmentally appropriate classroom children are not required to sit and attend to paperwork or listen to adult lectures for extended periods of time because such activity is at odds with children's biological needs. The curriculum should provide for a balance of active physical play and times of more restful, quiet activity since this pattern is compatible with the physical needs of children. Adults need to provide and environment where children feel safe, secure and accepted. Programs where parents are meaningfully involved are more likely to provide and effective learning environment for children.

Children construct their own knowledge through repeated experiences involving interaction with people and materials (Forman &

Kuschner, 1983) A child's active experimentation is like spontaneous research. The child discovers knowledge. Making mistakes or "constructive errors" are a necessary part of mental development. The evidence gathered from research in child development is so compelling that even groups like the Council for Basic Education, for years a supporter of the traditional format, have revised their thinking. "The idea of putting small children in front of workbooks and asking them to sit at their desks all day is a nightmare vision," (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989 p. 5)

Studies of children's emerging literacy clearly demonstrates that children actively construct their understanding of written language. (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982) When a five year old makes symbols on a page and says, "These are the friends I'm inviting to my party. Jenna, Abbie, Kendra and me!" This child is demonstrating evidence of an internal construction of the purpose of writing. She will change her writing strategies over time as her literacy learning develops. (NAEYC & NAECS/SED, 1990) In the early years of school, language development should not be broken down into the isolated skills of reading, writing and speaking.

Children learn through social interaction with adults and other children. The healthy development of young children begins in relationships with other human beings. The parent-child relationship is the primary example of social interaction through which very young children develop and learn. Language development is the fundamental building block to learning. Language development requires social interaction. Most adults can remember a situation where they did not really understand something until they had discussed it with several other people. Sometimes we do not really own a concept until we have articulated it to someone else. This kind of learning through social interaction is essential for children. Children need to be able to talk to each other and to adults in classroom situations. The single most important factor influencing children's literacy is the amount of time they are read to. (Bialostok, 1992) Learning takes place in an environment of social interaction.

New learning by children follows a fairly predictable pattern or cycle. Children learn by doing, by touching, experimenting, choosing, talking, negotiating and actively manipulating their environment. (NAEYC & NAECS/SED, 1990) When children have opportunities to become aware and develop an interest in something, explore and

inquire about it, they come to own their learning. Play is important because it is through play that children develop their imaginations and creativity, learn to deal with feelings, interact with others, resolve conflicts and gain a sense of competence. Children practice their newly acquired skills and knowledge during play. Play becomes more structured as children become older. Playing board and card games and group games with rules promotes the development of autonomy and cooperation which contributes to social, emotional, and intellectual development. (Kamii & DeVries, 1980)

Children are motivated to learn when the experiences and activities they are doing interest them. Teachers need to foster interest in their students by planning the environment and introducing interesting objects, people and experiences that will provide the motivational push that cause children to take responsibility for their own learning.

A wide range of individual variation in how and when children learn is normal and should be expected. Each child has an individual pattern and timing of growth and development as well as individual styles of learning. Personal family experiences and cultural backgrounds also vary and are influencing factors in how children

learn. Educators need to recognize and respect these differences and respond with sensitivity to each child as an individual learner.

EMERGING LITERACY

Literacy is no longer considered as simply a cognitive skill but as a complex activity with social, linguistic, and psychological aspects. Learning to read and write begins early in life and is ongoing. (Strickland, 1990) It has been observed that young children who live in an environment that is rich with books and print are constantly learning about written language and that most of their learning occurs as a natural part of their daily lives. Young children are introduced to the world of literacy by seeing adults reading magazines or correspondence, writing checks, or reading a recipe when baking cookies together. Children thus learn that literacy serves a function in the lives of those around them.

Learning to read and write are interrelated processes that develop in concert with oral language. (Strickland, 1990) Educators have known for years that a strong oral language base facilitates learning to read and write. Furthermore, it is clear that children's developing reading abilities influence their writing and that reading and writing experiences have an impact on oral language development. For young

children, the language arts mutually reinforce one another in development. (Strickland & Morrow, 1989)

The purpose of reading is to get the meaning of what is being read. In most elementary schools the dominant mode of reading instruction has been either the phonics approach or the sight word approach. Although phonics is a valuable tool for a beginning reader, this approach has received so much emphasis that inadequate time is spent on the essential purpose of reading, making meaning from text. People who choose to read do not read to learn new words or to practice phonics. (Bialostok, 1992) The California task force report, It's Elementary, recommends that the best approach in the instruction of all novice readers and writers is to create a rich environment steeped in authentic language and stimulating stories that vitally connect with what the children already know and are curious about.

Bialostok (1992) states that the best way for children to learn that the purpose of reading is for meaning is by being read to from the time they are infants. A parent reading aloud to a child does not care about teaching vocabulary words or phonetics. The critical message is sent that books have ideas, and that the purpose of reading is to get those ideas. When a baby is learning to understand and communicate, it

focuses only on meaning. The baby does not memorize individual words or sounds before communication exists. Humans learn to understand and communicate by listening to language and responding to its meanings. Parents do not speak to their children phonetically, or use isolated words when speaking. Children eventually speak using whole sentences without caring about the complex rules of grammar that they are using. Children discover how to talk by hearing language spoken. Children discover the same about reading by hearing books read aloud.

During the reading-aloud time, children experience books and print through the various stages that ultimately lead to independent reading. Bialostok (1992) proposes that these stages are not necessarily sequential or independent of each other, often overlapping, mixing, working in reverse or occurring at the same time. The first stage is learning to love books. A child's love for books and reading is fostered with early loving experiences. A parent who allows a child to associate books with love is helping to create attitudes that can never be duplicated in school. During the second stage a child begins to enjoy the meaning in books. As children listen while they are being read to they begin to respond to the meaning of the book. Some

stories might have a delightful rhythm that the child joins in with clapping or repeating. Other stories are just plain fun to hear. In these two stages a child also learns the third stage which is the physical steps of maneuvering a book and how to turn pages. This is not formally taught, but children must learn this in order to read. The fourth stage of learning to read independently is discovering that print has meaning. Print begins to be noticed in many different contexts. Children see print in different stimuli; on cereal boxes, newspapers, books, and all around them in their environment. It is a natural occurrence that they being to initiate questions about letters as they become increasingly observant of pint in the environment and in books.

Many parents are amazed when their child enters the fifth stage of learning to read independently which is memorizing books. At this stage children memorize the exact content, the sequence of the story and even when to turn the pages of a favorite book that has been read to them over and over again. In the sixth stage children rehearse their favorite books by "reading" the story to themselves, probably paying little, if any, attention to the print. The illustrations guide the reading at this important stage in the development of literacy. The more children

rehearse their favorite books the more attention they pay to the print. It is in this seventh stage that children begin to recognize words and even begin to point to some of the words. This is how a child gains control of the print and discovers what a written word is. As children see words again and again they naturally begin to recognize many of them in other meaningful contexts. There is an enormous difference between recognizing meaningful words in context and trying to learn them by using flash card drills.

The eighth stage of learning to read independently is developing fluency. Fluency and confidence increase as children recognize letters, actively predict the text and confirm predictions based on meaning that develops as they read. Independent reading is the ninth stage where a child can pick up either a familiar or an unfamiliar book and read it independently and with understanding. Increased fluency and independence involve a variation on all these stages of reading (Bialostok, 1992) We must begin to trust that children will read just as we trust that they will walk and talk.

Writing is another way in which children begin to understand how print works. If children have plenty of blank paper, pencils, pens and markers and are surrounded with an environment that is rich in print,

they will want to write. Young children's spellings exhibit the attempt to construct knowledge. Six year old Anna's use of "One DAY A BONOY WiAt To The FoArets" to write "One day a bunny went to the forest" shows that her emergent literacy behaviors are conceptual. As Anna has encountered written language she has begun to sort out the relationships between the written language symbols and oral language. Her "mistakes" are an important part of her learning and she feels successful and free to risk in her attempts at writing. Her procedures for solving the literacy puzzle are different from adult conventions and strategies, but they are logical and understandable. Her understandings and strategies have changed and will continue to change over time, showing that literacy is a developmental process. An emergent literacy curriculum emphasizes participation in activities that are meaningful from the child's point of view. (Strickland, 1990)

Young children's literacy learning grows out of a wide variety of experiences. Children construct their knowledge about print and their strategies for reading and writing from their independent explorations of written language, from interactions with parents and other literate persons, and from their observations of others engaged in literacy activities. (Strickland & Morrow, 1989) Reading is a form of language

and language learning occurs by doing the acts themselves: children learn to speak by speaking, to read by reading, and to write by writing.

STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to explore parent and teacher attitudes towards both developmentally appropriate instructional practice and skills based traditional instructional practices. Three key areas were examined: (1) attitudes towards student centered learning, (2) attitudes towards emerging literacy concepts, and (3) attitudes towards traditional learning approaches.

METHOD

SUBJECTS

Information for this study was collected from teachers and parents of kindergarten, first and second grade students in Marin County, California in March 1993. Ten teacher surveys were returned from a total of seventeen surveys sent out. Forty-four parent surveys were returned from a total of sixty surveys sent out. The researcher wanted to gather information on a primary student population, by using teachers and parents from several different schools.

DESIGN

The researcher designed an instrument to survey teachers and parents about their attitudes towards developmentally appropriate instructional practice and traditional skills based instructional practice in kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms. (See Appendix A). Each of the parents who responded from the forty-four surveys indicated the gender of their child, ethnicity of their family, grade of their student, total number of children within their household, highest level of education parents have attained and person completing the survey.

This survey included key questions to reflect teachers and parents attitudes towards key ingredients of developmentally appropriate instructional practice and traditional skills based instructional practice. Questions 1-4, 7-8 10-14, 16, 18, 21-22, 24-26, 29, 32-33, 41, 43-44 focused on key ingredients of developmentally appropriate practice. Within the questions on developmentally appropriate practice, questions 1, 3-4, 10, 12-13, 16, 21-22, 25-26, 29, and 43 were asked to ascertain attitudes towards student centered learning and activities, and questions 2, 7-8, 18, 24, 32, 40-41, and 42 were asked to find out about attitudes towards the concept of

emerging literacy. Questions 5, 6, 9, 15, 17, 19, 20, 23, 27-28, 30-31, 34-39, and 42 focused on traditional skills based instructional practice.

RESULTS

Table 1

Combined Responses	**Teacher Approval**	**Parent Approval**
Student Centered Responses	88%	84%
Emerging Literacy Responses	84%	68%
Traditional Skills Based Responses	17%	37%

The data collected from this research (See Appendix B), were calculated and reported as percentages in order to reflect parents attitudes and teachers attitudes. As shown in Tables 2-4, a percentage was calculated for each question. Table 1 shows a combined calculation for the three areas that were addressed; student centered learning, emerging literacy, and traditional skills based instructional practice. (See Table 1.)

As shown in Table 2, the first key area focused on attitudes towards elements of student centered learning typical of a developmentally appropriate classroom. (See Table 2) Eighty-four

Table 2

	First Key Area: Attitudes Towards Student Centered Learning.	**Teacher Approval**	**Parent Approval**
1	Children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups.	90%	84%
3	Children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support.	80%	83%
4	Children's interests should be given a high prioroty when planning for curriculum and instruction.	100%	84%
10	Student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than acheivement testing.	100%	95%
12	Teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development.	100%	100%
13	Hands on activities are valuable learning activities.	100%	100%
16	The curriculum should focus more on in depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.	70%	67%
21	Classroom programs should meet the needs of children possessing a wide range of skills, abilities, and maturity.	90%	91%
22	Schools should use a non graded multi aged educational program that allows children to advance through K-2 at their own pace.	40%	47%
25	Children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of class time manipulating objects and exploring.	100%	74%
26	When children want and like to read, they become good readers.	100%	91%
29	Children learn best sitiing quietly at their desks listening to the teacher.	90%	93%

percent of combined parent responses and 88% of combined teacher responses indicated agreement that kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms should concentrate on student centered activities and modes of learning. (See Table 1) Eight-three percent of teachers and 90% of parents felt that children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups. Eighty-three percent of parents and 80% of teachers believe that children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support. Eighty-four percent of parents and 100% of teachers believe that children's interests should be given a high priority when planning for curriculum and instruction.

The results of this survey show that 95% of parents and 100% of teachers felt that student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing. One hundred percent of parents and teachers who responded to this survey believe that teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development and that hands on activities are valuable learning experiences. Parents and teachers had varied responses when they answered question #22. Forty-seven percent of parents and 40% of teachers agreed that schools should use a non-graded/multi-

aged educational program that allows children to advance through grades K-2 at their own pace. Forty-two percent of parents and 40% of teachers were undecided about this question while 12% of parents and 20% of teachers disagreed with the concept. Seventy-four percent of parents felt that children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of their class time manipulating objects and exploring while 100% of the teachers agreed with the question.

As shown in Table 3, the second key area included statements about the concept of emerging literacy, another important ingredient of developmentally appropriate instructional practice. (See Table 3) Sixty-eight percent of combined parent responses indicated they agreed with the concept of emerging literacy. Eighty-four percent of combined teacher responses indicated they agreed with the concept of emerging literacy. (See Table 1) Twenty-six percent of parents felt that a child is reading when he/she has memorized words. Fifty percent of teachers agreed that a child is reading when he/she has memorized words. One hundred percent of both parents and teachers believe that developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education. Fifty-five percent of parents agreed that a child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of

Table 3

	Second Key Area: Attitudes Towards Emerging Literacy.	**Teacher Approval**	**Parent Approval**
2	A child is reading when he/she has memorized words.	50%	26%
7	Developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education.	100%	100%
8	A child is learning to read when he/she picks up a book and reads the pictures.	100%	70%
11	A child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom.	100%	55%
18	Reading to children is appropriate and valuable as homework.	100%	98%
24	A child is reading when he/she recognizes words.	100%	79%
32	One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis.	100%	88%
40	Good readers are those who get meaning out of reading.	100%	79%
41	Children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language.	90%	90%
43	Teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing.	90%	38%
44	The extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.	100%	100%

the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom. One hundred percent of teachers agreed with this statement. Eighty-eight percent of parents and 100% of teachers agreed that one of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis. Ninety percent of parents and teachers surveyed believe that children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language. Thirty-eight percent of parents and 90% of teachers agreed that teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing. Twenty-one percent of parents were undecided about this and 40% disagreed.

As shown in Table 4, the third key area dealt with attitudes towards traditional, skills based instructional practice. (See Table 4) Thirty-seven percent of combined parent responses and 17% of combined teacher responses indicated a preference for traditional, skills based instruction in the classroom. (See Table 1) Eighty-four percent of parents and 30% of teachers felt that workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools. Five percent of parents and 10% of teachers believe that children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks. Seventy percent of parents and 30% of teachers surveyed believe that homework is

Table 4

	Third Key Area: Traditional Skills Based Instructional Practice	**Teacher Approval**	**Parent Approval**
5	I believe it is the sole responsibility of the school to teach a child to read.	10%	2%
6	Workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools.	30%	84%
9	Children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks.	10%	5%
15	Children learn best when working independently toward set objectives.	10%	19%
17	Homework is valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level.	30%	70%
19	Children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction.	10%	51%
20	Speed and practice make a good reader.	10%	33%
23	Students' progress should be measured by achievement tests.	0%	12%
27	Children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level.	10%	56%
28	Children learn best sitting quietly at their desk listening to the teacher.	10%	12%
30	Report cards with letter grades (ie: A,B,C, D, F) are appropriate for K-2 grade students.	0%	7%
31	One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is that the child is born with verbal intelligence.	0%	2%
34	The best place to practice reading is in the classroom.	10%	2%

Table 4 Continued

	Third Key Area: Traditional Skills Based Instructional Practice Part II	**Teacher Approval**	**Parent Approval**
35	I believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills.	20%	48%
36	Homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility at the K-2 level.	40%	67%
37	Phonics drill worksheets are the best way to practice reading skills.	0%	26%
38	Learning to write means learning correct penmanship.	0%	33%
39	Having a child practice sounding out words is helpful if he/she is having difficulty in reading.	50%	93%
40	Good readers are those who get menaing out of reading.	100%	79%
42	Learning to read and write is the most significant part of school success.	70%	74%

valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level. Fifty-one percent of parents and 10% of teachers agreed that children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction. Twelve percent of parents and no teachers agreed with students' progress being measured by achievement tests. Fifty-six percent of parents and 10% of teachers believe that a child should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level. Eight-one percent of parents and 90% of teachers agree that the curriculum should integrate subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately. Forty-eight percent of parents and 20% of teachers believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills. Sixty-seven percent of parents and 40% of teachers felt that homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility.

DISCUSSION

The results of these surveys indicated that most parents and teachers strongly favor a majority of the concepts of developmentally appropriate instructional practice. These concepts include hands on activities, development of interpersonal skills and working cooperatively in small groups for learning concepts and problem solving. Other areas strongly supported were giving children

opportunities to initiate, construct, and evaluate learning experiences, and the adaptation of teaching methods to individual stages of development. Both groups favored student assessment based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing.

Based on the results of the survey, parents and teachers prefer that K-2 children spend most of their class time manipulating objects and exploring rather than doing paper and pencil tasks. Both groups strongly preferred integration of subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately; both preferred that the curriculum would focus more on in-depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.

Although neither group favored a non graded/multi-aged program, it was noted that both groups strongly opposed letter grades, A,B,C,D,F, in K-2 grades. Additionally, both groups strongly favored play as a major part of a K-2 curriculum.

In a few areas there were important differences between parent and teacher responses. A majority of parents indicated that they believed that workbooks and textbooks were valuable learning tools, differing from teacher opinion. All of the teachers surveyed believed

that children were reading when they recognized the written names of people in their family or classroom, but only a little over half of the parents believed that such recognition constituted reading. Most parents believed that homework was valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level, but only a few of the teachers believed it to be valuable. About half of the parents believed that children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade; only one teacher surveyed agreed with them. Most of the parents believed that it was helpful to have children sound out words if they were having trouble reading, but only half of the teachers agreed. A few parents agreed that teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing; a majority of the teachers agreed with them. Many parents are unfamiliar with inventive spelling, while most teachers have experienced its benefit for students. Another significant area of difference was in attitudes towards phonics instruction. Approximately 50% of the parents believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills, while only 20% of the teachers surveyed believe this to be true.

A few of the questions elicited unanimous agreement with both teachers and parents. Both groups unanimously agreed that

developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in children's education. Both groups also were unanimously agreed that the extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.

From this particular study, the researcher concluded that kindergarten, first and second grade parents and teachers in several schools in Marin County generally prefer developmentally appropriate instructional practice rather than traditional skills based instructional practice.

The aim of this study was to examine parent and teacher attitudes towards developmentally appropriate and traditional instructional practice. Developmentally appropriate instructional practice is at the heart of the educational reform and restructuring movement and has the interests of the student at its core. Central to its implementation is a well-trained staff supported by knowledgeable and informed parents. Efforts are needed for teachers of young children to be trained in developmentally appropriate practice and to ensure that parents are informed as well. Teachers need to be able to articulate the "whys" of their teaching strategies so that parents can better understand and

support their children's learning. (Hoffman & Kantner, 1992) A recommendation in the future would be to allow parents to become actively involved in their child's education by assisting in the classrooms as much as possible, by hosting free workshops giving information about current research regarding how children emerge into literacy, and by encouraging programs such as Parents as Reading Partners (PARP). By doing this, teachers and parents would be actively working together to bring about the changes needed to ensure success for our children as we enter the turn of the century.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Carol S. Wise
Graduate Student
Dominican College
San Rafael, CA

March 16, 1993

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you, a primary grade parent, to ask for a few minutes of your time. As a parent, you know your child best and have had the opportunity to observe his or her learning styles and progress in learning to read and write.

I am currently attending Dominican College and gathering information for my thesis toward a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I need the assistance of primary grade parents to complete my reasearch. The information you provide, will assist me in analyzing the factors that help a child to become successful in reading and writing.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would share your observations and beliefs with me. The attached survey should only take 5-10 minutes of your time to complete. Thank you in advance for completing the survey and having your child return it to School by tomorrow, March 18, or March 19, 1993. All individual questionnaires will be kept confidential.

Sincerely yours,

Carol S. Wise

Parent Background Survey

Any of the below questions are optional. Thank you very much!

Please check the following:

Gender of my primary grade child:

❒Female ❒Male

Ethnicity of family:

❒Native American ❒Black ❒Asian or Pacific Islander

❒Hispanic ❒European ❒Filipino

❒Middle Eastern ❒Vietnamese ❒Other

Grade of my primary student:

❒Kindergarten ❒First ❒Second

Total number of children in household:

❒1 child ❒2 children

❒3 children ❒4 or more children

Highest level of education parent or guardian has attained:

❒High School diploma

❒Associate of Arts Degree

❒B.A. or B.S. Degree

❒M.A. or M.S. Degree

❒Ph.D.

❒Other

Person completing the survey:

❒Mother ❒Father ❒Other

Please answer the following questions from your point of view as a teacher or as a parent. Circle the appropriate response:

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree or tend to agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree or tend to disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

1. Children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups.	SA	A	U	D	SD
2. A child is reading when he/she has memorized words.	SA	A	U	D	SD
3. Children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4. Children's interests should be given a high priority when planning for curriculum and instruction.	SA	A	U	D	SD
5. I believe it is the sole responsibility of the school to teach a child to read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. Workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools.	SA	A	U	D	SD
7. Developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education.	SA	A	U	D	SD
8. A child is learning to read when he/she picks up a book and reads the pictures.	SA	A	U	D	SD
9. Children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks.	SA	A	U	D	SD
10. Student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. A child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
12. Teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development.	SA	A	U	D	SD
13. Hands on activities are valuable learning experiences.	SA	A	U	D	SD

14. Children of kindergarten age should be encouraged to enter the school program regardless of their level of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. Children learn best when working independently toward set objectives.	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. The curriculum should focus more on in-depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. Homework is valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
18. Reading to children is appropriate and valuable as homework.	SA	A	U	D	SD
19. Children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction.	SA	A	U	D	SD
20. Speed and practice make a good reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
21. Classroom programs should meet the needs of children possessing a wide range of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA	A	U	D	SD
22. Schools should use a non-graded/multi-aged educational program that allows children to advance through grades K-2 at their own pace.	SA	A	U	D	SD
23. Students' progress should be measured by achievement tests.	SA	A	U	D	SD
24. A child is reading when he/she recognizes words.	SA	A	U	D	SD
25. Children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of their class time manipulating objects and exploring.	SA	A	U	D	SD
26. When children want to read and like to read, they become good readers.	SA	A	U	D	SD
27. Children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
28. Children learn best sitting quietly at their desk listening to the teacher.	SA	A	U	D	SD

29. Play should be an important part of a K-2 curriculum.	SA	A	U	D	SD
30. Report cards with letter grades (ie: A,B,C,D,F) are appropriate for K-2 grade students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
31. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is that the child is born with verbal intelligence.	SA	A	U	D	SD
32. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis.	SA	A	U	D	SD
33. The curriculum should integrate subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately.	SA	A	U	D	SD
34. The best place to practice reading is in the classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
35. I believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills.	SA	A	U	D	SD
36. Homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility at the K-2 level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
37. Phonics drill worksheets are the best way to practice reading skills.	SA	A	U	D	SD
38. Learning to write means learning correct penmanship.	SA	A	U	D	SD
39. Having a child practice sounding out words is helpful if he/she is having difficulty in reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
40. Good readers are those who get meaning out of reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
41. Children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language.	SA	A	U	D	SD
42. Learning to read and write is the most significant part of school success.	SA	A	U	D	SD
43. Teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
44. The extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.	SA	A	U	D	SD

Parent Background Survey

Any of the below questions are optional. Thank you very much!

Please check the following:

Gender of my primary grade child:

[55%] Female [45%] Male

Ethnicity of family:

[0] Native American [7%] Black [5%] Asian or Pacific Islander

[2%] Hispanic [70%] European [0] Filipino

[0] Middle Eastern [0] Vietnamese [16%] Other

Grade of my primary student:

[27%] Kindergarten [50%] First [23%] Second

Total number of children in household:

[11%] 1 child [41%] 3 children

[36%] 2 children [11%] 4 or more children

Highest level of education parent or guardian has attained:

[7%] High School diploma

[16%] Associate of Arts Degree

[50%] B.A. or B.S. Degree

[23%] M.A. or M.S. Degree

[0%] Ph.D.

[5%] Other

Person completing the survey:

[82%] Mother [16%] Father [2%] Other

Please answer the following questions from your point of view as a teacher or as a parent. Circle the appropriate response:

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree or tend to agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree or tend to disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

	SA/A	U	D/SD
1. Children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups.	84%	7%	7%
2. A child is reading when he/she has memorized words.	26%	7%	67%
3. Children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support.	83%	7%	10%
4. Children's interests should be given a high priority when planning for curriculum and instruction.	84%	12%	5%
5. I believe it is the sole responsibility of the school to teach a child to read.	2%	2%	95%
6. Workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools.	84%	5%	12%
7. Developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education.	100%	0%	0%
8. A child is learning to read when he/she picks up a book and reads the pictures.	70%	7%	23%
9. Children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks.	5%	0%	95%
10. Student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing.	95%	2%	2%
11. A child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom.	55%	12%	33%
12. Teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development.	100%	0%	0%
13. Hands on activities are valuable learning experiences.	100%	0%	0%

14. Children of kindergarten age should be encouraged to enter the school program regardless of their level of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA/A 26%	U 14%	D/SD 60%
15. Children learn best when working independently toward set objectives.	SA/A 19%	U 35%	D/SD 47%
16. The curriculum should focus more on in-depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.	SA/A 67%	U 21%	D/SD 12%
17. Homework is valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level.	SA/A 70%	U 7%	D/SD 23%
18. Reading to children is appropriate and valuable as homework.	SA/A 98%	U 2%	D/SD 0%
19. Children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction.	SA/A 51%	U 12%	D/SD 37%
20. Speed and practice make a good reader.	SA/A 33%	U 21%	D/SD 47%
21. Classroom programs should meet the needs of children possessing a wide range of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA/A 91%	U 5%	D/SD 5%
22. Schools should use a non-graded/multi-aged educational program that allows children to advance through grades K-2 at their own pace.	SA/A 47%	U 42%	D/SD 12%
23. Students' progress should be measured by achievement tests.	SA/A 12%	U 12%	D/SD 77%
24. A child is reading when he/she recognizes words.	SA/A 79%	U 7%	D/SD 14%
25. Children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of their class time manipulating objects and exploring.	SA/A 74%	U 14%	D/SD 12%
26. When children want to read and like to read, they become good readers.	SA/A 91%	U 2%	D/SD 7%
27. Children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level.	SA/A 56%	U 19%	D/SD 26%
28. Children learn best sitting quietly at their desk listening to the teacher.	SA/A 12%	U 7%	D/SD 81%

29. Play should be an important part of a K-2 curriculum.	SA/A 93%	U 5%	D/SD 2%
30. Report cards with letter grades (ie: A,B,C,D,F) are appropriate for K-2 grade students.	SA/A 7%	U 12%	D/SD 81%
31. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is that the child is born with verbal intelligence.	SA/A 2%	U 21%	D/SD 77%
32. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis.	SA/A 88%	U 7%	D/SD 5%
33. The curriculum should integrate subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately.	SA/A 81%	U 14%	D/SD 5%
34. The best place to practice reading is in the classroom.	SA/A 2%	U 8%	D/SD 80%
35. I believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills.	SA/A 48%	U 26%	D/SD 26%
36. Homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility at the K-2 level.	SA/A 67%	U 9%	D/SD 23%
37. Phonics drill worksheets are the best way to practice reading skills.	SA/A 26%	U 30%	D/SD 44%
38. Learning to write means learning correct penmanship.	SA/A 33%	U 14%	D/SD 52%
39. Having a child practice sounding out words is helpful if he/she is having difficulty in reading.	SA/A 93%	U 7%	D/SD 0%
40. Good readers are those who get meaning out of reading.	SA/A 79%	U 9%	D/SD 12%
41. Children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language.	SA/A 90%	U 7%	D/SD 2%
42. Learning to read and write is the most significant part of school success.	SA/A 74%	U 3%	D/SD 24%
43. Teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing.	SA/A 38%	U 21%	D/SD 40%
44. The extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%

Appendix B

Carol S. Wise
Graduate Student
Dominican College
San Rafael, CA

March 15, 1993

Dear Teachers,

I would like to ask for a few minutes of your time. I am currently attending Dominican College and gathering information for my thesis toward a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I need the assistance of kindergarten, first and second grade teachers to complete my research. The information you provide will assist me in analyzing the factors that help students become more successful in reading and writing.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would share your observations and beliefs with me. The attached survey should only take 5-10 minutes of your time to complete. Thank you in advance for completing the survey and returning it to the manila envelope in the staff room labeled "SURVEY" by tomorrow, March 16th, or Wednesday March 17th, 1993. All individual questionnaires will be kept confidential.

Sincerely yours,

Carol S. Wise

Teacher Background Survey

Date Teaching Credential Obtained (Month/Year)

Name of Credential (s): Circle One: Multiple Subject Single Subject Both

Please name other credentials held:

Number of years of paid teaching experience:
(Please list most recent experiences first)

Grade: Years:

Grade: Years:

Grade: Years:

What do you think is the most significant new idea in education today?

Please answer the following questions from your point of view as a teacher or as a parent. Circle the appropriate response:

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree or tend to agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree or tend to disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

1. Children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups.	SA	A	U	D	SD
2. A child is reading when he/she has memorized words.	SA	A	U	D	SD
3. Children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4. Children's interests should be given a high priority when planning for curriculum and instruction.	SA	A	U	D	SD
5. I believe it is the sole responsibility of the school to teach a child to read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. Workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools.	SA	A	U	D	SD
7. Developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education.	SA	A	U	D	SD
8. A child is learning to read when he/she picks up a book and reads the pictures.	SA	A	U	D	SD
9. Children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks.	SA	A	U	D	SD
10. Student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. A child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
12. Teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development.	SA	A	U	D	SD
13. Hands on activities are valuable learning experiences.	SA	A	U	D	SD

14. Children of kindergarten age should be encouraged to enter the school program regardless of their level of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. Children learn best when working independently toward set objectives.	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. The curriculum should focus more on in-depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. Homework is valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
18. Reading to children is appropriate and valuable as homework.	SA	A	U	D	SD
19. Children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction.	SA	A	U	D	SD
20. Speed and practice make a good reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
21. Classroom programs should meet the needs of children possessing a wide range of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA	A	U	D	SD
22. Schools should use a non-graded/multi-aged educational program that allows children to advance through grades K-2 at their own pace.	SA	A	U	D	SD
23. Students' progress should be measured by achievement tests.	SA	A	U	D	SD
24. A child is reading when he/she recognizes words.	SA	A	U	D	SD
25. Children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of their class time manipulating objects and exploring.	SA	A	U	D	SD
26. When children want to read and like to read, they become good readers.	SA	A	U	D	SD
27. Children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
28. Children learn best sitting quietly at their desk listening to the teacher.	SA	A	U	D	SD

29. Play should be an important part of a K-2 curriculum.	SA	A	U	D	SD
30. Report cards with letter grades (ie: A,B,C,D,F) are appropriate for K-2 grade students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
31. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is that the child is born with verbal intelligence.	SA	A	U	D	SD
32. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis.	SA	A	U	D	SD
33. The curriculum should integrate subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately.	SA	A	U	D	SD
34. The best place to practice reading is in the classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
35. I believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills.	SA	A	U	D	SD
36. Homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility at the K-2 level.	SA	A	U	D	SD
37. Phonics drill worksheets are the best way to practice reading skills.	SA	A	U	D	SD
38. Learning to write means learning correct penmanship.	SA	A	U	D	SD
39. Having a child practice sounding out words is helpful if he/she is having difficulty in reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
40. Good readers are those who get meaning out of reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
41. Children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language.	SA	A	U	D	SD
42. Learning to read and write is the most significant part of school success.	SA	A	U	D	SD
43. Teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
44. The extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.	SA	A	U	D	SD

Please answer the following questions from your point of view as a teacher or as a parent. Circle the appropriate response:

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree or tend to agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree or tend to disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

1. Children learn concepts and solve problems best by working cooperatively in small groups.	SA/A 90%	U 10%	D/SD 0%
2. A child is reading when he/she has memorized words.	SA/A 50%	U 20%	D/SD 30%
3. Children need opportunities to design and evaluate their own learning experiences with teacher support.	SA/A 80%	U 20%	D/SD 0%
4. Children's interests should be given a high priority when planning for curriculum and instruction.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
5. I believe it is the sole responsibility of the school to teach a child to read.	SA/A 10%	U 0%	D/SD 90%
6. Workbooks and textbooks are valuable learning tools.	SA/A 30%	U 20%	D/SD 50%
7. Developing communication and interpersonal skills should receive a high priority in a child's education.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
8. A child is learning to read when he/she picks up a book and reads the pictures.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
9. Children in grades K-2 should spend most of their class time doing paper and pencil tasks.	SA/A 10%	U 0%	D/SD 90%
10. Student assessment should be based on teacher observation and work samples rather than achievement testing.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
11. A child is reading when he/she recognizes the written names of the people in his/her family or children in his/her classroom.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
12. Teaching methods should be adapted to children's stages of development.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
13. Hands on activities are valuable learning experiences.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%

14. Children of kindergarten age should be encouraged to enter the school program regardless of their level of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA/A 40%	U 30%	D/SD 30%
15. Children learn best when working independently toward set objectives.	SA/A 10%	U 40%	D/SD 50%
16. The curriculum should focus more on in-depth projects that interest the children and are appropriate to their abilities.	SA/A 70%	U 10%	D/SD 20%
17. Homework is valuable for reinforcing skills at the K-2 level.	SA/A 30%	U 20%	D/SD 50%
18. Reading to children is appropriate and valuable as homework.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
19. Children of similar abilities should be grouped for instruction.	SA/A 10%	U 10%	D/SD 80%
20. Speed and practice make a good reader.	SA/A 10%	U 30%	D/SD 60%
21. Classroom programs should meet the needs of children possessing a wide range of skills, abilities and maturity.	SA/A 90%	U 10%	D/SD 0%
22. Schools should use a non-graded/multi-aged educational program that allows children to advance through grades K-2 at their own pace.	SA/A 40%	U 40%	D/SD 20%
23. Students' progress should be measured by achievement tests.	SA/A 0%	U 0%	D/SD 100%
24. A child is reading when he/she recognizes words.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
25. Children in grades K-2 should spend a significant amount of their class time manipulating objects and exploring.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
26. When children want to read and like to read, they become good readers.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
27. Children should attain a level of specific skills before moving on to the next grade level.	SA/A 10%	U 40%	D/SD 50%
28. Children learn best sitting quietly at their desk listening to the teacher.	SA/A 10%	U 0%	D/SD 90%

29. Play should be an important part of a K-2 curriculum.	SA/A 90%	U 10%	D/SD 0%
30. Report cards with letter grades (ie: A,B,C,D,F) are appropriate for K-2 grade students.	SA/A 0%	U 0%	D/SD 100%
31. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is that the child is born with verbal intelligence.	SA/A 0%	U 20%	D/SD 80%
32. One of the greatest factors leading to a child's success in reading is being read to on a regular basis.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
33. The curriculum should integrate subject areas into themes rather than studying subjects separately.	SA/A 90%	U 10%	D/SD 0%
34. The best place to practice reading is in the classroom.	SA/A 10%	U 0%	D/SD 90%
35. I believe that the greatest factor leading to a child's success in reading is learning phonics skills.	SA/A 20%	U 20%	D/SD 60%
36. Homework is valuable in teaching children responsibility at the K-2 level.	SA/A 40%	U 20%	D/SD 40%
37. Phonics drill worksheets are the best way to practice reading skills.	SA/A 0%	U 10%	D/SD 90%
38. Learning to write means learning correct penmanship.	SA/A 0%	U 0%	D/SD 100%
39. Having a child practice sounding out words is helpful if he/she is having difficulty in reading.	SA/A 50%	U 40%	D/SD 10%
40. Good readers are those who get meaning out of reading.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%
41. Children develop as readers in developmental stages in much the same way as they develop oral language.	SA/A 90%	U 0%	D/SD 10%
42. Learning to read and write is the most significant part of school success.	SA/A 70%	U 0%	D/SD 30%
43. Teachers should allow children to use inventive spelling in creative writing.	SA/A 90%	U 0%	D/SD 10%
44. The extent to which children are able to become competent readers and writers depends on the combined efforts of both parents and teachers.	SA/A 100%	U 0%	D/SD 0%